

IN THE CLAIMS

Current Listing Of Claims:

1-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently amended) A method of cleaning a wafer comprising:
spinning a wafer having a frontside and a backside;
exposing said frontside of said spinning wafer to an etchant or cleaning chemicals;

after exposing said wafer to said etchant or cleaning chemical,
applying a liquid having a lower surface tension than water to ~~[[on]]~~ said frontside of said spinning wafer; and

after applying the liquid having a lower surface tension than water,
dispensing a liquid DeIonized (DI) water through a nozzle and applying the liquid DI water,~~which has been DeIonized (DI),~~ to said frontside of said wafer,

wherein the liquid having a lower surface tension than water is applied to the frontside of the wafer separately from and not simultaneously with or while
~~and the liquid DI water is are each applied separately~~ to the frontside of the wafer.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32 further comprising
applying megasonics energy to said backside of said wafer while exposing said frontside of said wafer to said cleaning chemicals or etchants.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32 further comprising applying megasonics energy to said backside of said wafer while applying said liquid DI water to said frontside of said wafer.

37. (Currently amended) A method of rinsing chemicals or etchants from a wafer comprising:

rotating a wafer having a frontside and a backside;

dispensing cleaning chemicals or etchants onto said frontside of said wafer to form an etchant or chemical covered wafer;

immediately after dispensing said cleaning chemicals or etchants onto said rotating wafer, applying a vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water onto said cleaning chemical or etchant covered wafer; and

immediately after applying said vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water, dispensing a liquid DeIonized (DI) rinse water through a nozzle and applying the liquid DI rinse water onto said frontside of said spinning wafer,

wherein the vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water is applied onto the frontside of the wafer separately from and not simultaneously with or while ~~and~~ the liquid DI rinse water is ~~are each~~ applied separately onto the frontside of the wafer.

38. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37 further comprising heating said liquid DI rinse water prior to applying ~~dispensing~~ said liquid DI rinse water onto said frontside of said wafer.

39. (Currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein said liquid DI rinse water is heated to a temperature between 60-70°C.

40. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37 further comprising ~~comprise~~ applying megasonics energy to said backside of said wafer while applying ~~dispensing~~ said liquid DI rinse water onto said frontside of said wafer.

41. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37 further comprising stopping said applying ~~dispensing~~ of said liquid DI rinse water and spinning said wafer dry.

42. (Currently amended) A method of cleaning or etching a wafer comprising:

placing a wafer having a frontside and a backside on a support over a plate having a plurality of transducers formed thereon, wherein said wafer is horizontally supported and separated by a gap from said plate;

flowing a backside liquid in said gap between said backside of said wafer and said support;

dispensing chemicals or etchants onto said frontside of said wafer to form a chemical or etchant covered wafer while flowing said liquid in said gap;

after dispensing said chemicals or said etchant, dispensing a liquid having a lower surface tension than water or a vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water onto said chemical or etchant covered wafer;

after dispensing ~~applying~~ said vapor or liquid, dispensing DeIonized (DI) rinse water through a nozzle and onto said frontside of said spinning wafer,

wherein the liquid having a lower surface tension than water or the vapor produced from the liquid having a lower surface tension than water is dispensed onto the frontside of the wafer separately from and not simultaneously

with or while [[, and]] the liquid DI water ~~is are each applied separately to~~ dispensed onto the frontside of the wafer;

applying megasonics energy to said backside of said wafer from said transducer while dispensing said DI rinse water onto said frontside of said wafer;
and

after dispensing said DI rinse water onto said frontside of said wafer
~~exposing said frontside of said spinning wafer to DI water~~, blowing a fluid at the center of the frontside of said wafer while said wafer is spinning with sufficient force to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42 further comprising applying megasonics energy to said backside of said wafer from said transducers while said dispensing of said chemical or said etchant.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42 further comprising heating said DI rinse water prior to dispensing ~~applying~~ said DI rinse water onto said frontside of said wafer.

45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 44 wherein said DI rinse water is heated to a temperature between 60-70°C.

46. (Cancelled)

47. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, further comprising after applying the liquid DI water to ~~exposing~~ said frontside of said spinning wafer ~~to DI water~~, blowing a fluid at the center of the frontside of said wafer while said wafer is spinning to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer.

48. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37, further comprising after applying the liquid DI rinse water onto ~~exposing~~ said frontside of said spinning wafer ~~to DI water~~, blowing a gas at the center of the frontside of said wafer while said wafer is spinning with sufficient force to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer.

49. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36, further comprising after applying the liquid DI water to ~~exposing~~ said frontside of said spinning wafer ~~to DI water~~, blowing a gas at the center of the frontside of said wafer while said wafer is spinning with sufficient flow to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer.

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32, wherein the liquid having a lower surface tension than water comprises isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

52. (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water comprises isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

53. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the liquid having a lower surface tension than water comprises isopropyl alcohol (IPA); and wherein the vapor produced from a liquid having a lower surface tension than water comprises isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

54. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the fluid, which is blown onto the center of the wafer to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer comprises liquid isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

55. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the fluid, which is blown onto the center of the wafer to remove a DI water bulge formed at the center of the wafer comprises a gas selected from the group consisting of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) vapor, nitrogen gas, helium gas, argon gas, and any combination thereof.